

# MATWATCH

213 Pine Hills Ave. Auburn Al 36830

MATWATCH EXTRA: CONTINENTAL TO FOLD.....Details on Page 2

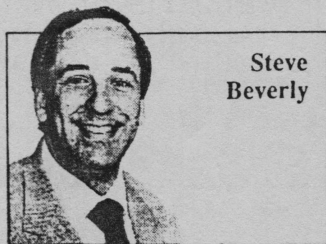
VOL. 2, NO. 24

DECEMBER 4-10



## THIS IS NOT REAL??? SO WHAT!!

Picture yourself a professional wrestler walking the streets of New Haven on a Sunday morning. You go to the newsstand and buy the Sunday NEW YORK TIMES.



Steve Beverly

Flipping through, you find the bottom center of the Business front and see a picture of two guys who look awfully familiar. Above them are 14 letters, four words: THIS IS NOT REAL.

Reports are the reaction of many NWA wrestlers was very real, bordering on rage over the two-page piece in which the TIMES explored Ted Turner's endeavors to

become a player on the footing of Vince McMahon in the genre of pro wrestling.

Shock, irritation, even betrayal were the bywords expressed. A few NWA competitors even forecasted the story hastened the business's obituary.

BALONEY!!!

After hearing these hellfire and brimstone stories, I dashed to the Auburn University library and poured over the article twice. All I can say is: if the NWA guys are still angry, get over it---and fast!

THIS IS NOT REAL was a real masterstroke of publicity for the NWA, which many of us have challenged for months as to why it could not engender major press coverage on its own. World Championship Wrestling senior vice president Jim Herd has taken heat from his wrestlers for the story. Instead, he should be congratulated, as should anyone in TBS who had a hand in it. Why?

\*\*\* The TIMES story gave credibility to the NWA as a major league organization with little overt comparison or contrast to the WWF.

\*\*\* It was honest in portraying Turner's attempts to bridge the gap between cartoon exaggerations and classic wrestling athleticism.

\*\*\* Considering the cost of ad space in the TIMES, comparable paid propaganda would have cost the NWA upwards of \$100,000.

\*\*\* Herd, criticized last week by some of his troops for allegedly "exposing the business," did no such thing. Only two quotes were directly attributed to Herd: 1) about beefing up costuming (the outfit he described sounded exactly like BIG VAN VADER's) and 2) about how Turner wanted no blood and heavily reduced violence. All of the other "exposure" was done by TIMES writer N.R. Kleinfield himself.

\*\*\* At least 14 NWA wrestlers were detailed in the piece in the nation's largest city, which currently doesn't even have a WCW schedule.

\*\*\* It proved the value of holding a CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS in the unlikely place of Troy, N.Y., where the story was filed.

In all fairness to the wrestlers, many of the NWA contingent were raised on the "protect-the-business-at-all-cost" parenting by promoters who trained them. But in 1990, life just isn't that way.

For one thing, the business has been "exposed" so many times the last five years, Kleinfield hardly shook the earth with his "revelations."

In 1985, between Eddy Mansfield's open demonstration of blading on 20/20 and the open declarations on an NBC Sportsworld, ticket sales only hit record highs. By the next year, virtually every TV market in America had presented investigative series into the reality issue, enough to keep it in the mind of every news viewer.

In January when the TIMES broke the story on McMahon's testimony before state legislatures that WWF outcomes were predetermined, there was no appreciable drop in its crowds and---while it was a first with a promotion "telling on itself," the demographics of wrestling have changed so drastically that it really didn't matter.

In a 1985 interview with the Carolina News Network, when asked, "Does it really matter if it's real?," even Jim Crockett acknowledged, "No. It doesn't matter."

I sympathize with wrestlers adapting to a changing focus in their profession. It's similar to us in television news who had to adapt to outside consultants influencing content of local newscasts. We didn't much like them. But with 5 years of national TV exposure, broadly expanded media coverage and increasingly sophisticated fans, maintaining wrestling's classic myth is, if you please, obsolete.

NEW YORK TIMES stories aren't hurting the wrestling business. It's the genre's saturation, excesses and presentation of events people do not want to see. Besides, the TIMES offered the most optimistic forecast of WCW's eventual success I'm yet to see in the mainstream media.

Besides, if the guys are worried about the stereotypical "toothless wonders" in fandom, consider how many of them read business news in the NEW YORK TIMES.

If anything, the NWA needs this kind of story in every paper in America. At least people would be talking about it.



## CONTINENTAL TO FOLD IN JANUARY; WOODS: "I JUST RAN OUT OF MONEY"

MONTGOMERY, Ala. --- In the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, "Cinderella," the fairy godmother sings the lyrics, "Impossible things are happening every day." She never sang them to David Woods.

In a move rumored for seven weeks, Woods, the young TV executive who bought Continental Championship Wrestling from Ron Fuller in February 1988, will fold his CWF promotion in January. Though publicly Woods is saying he hasn't firmly decided on the CWF's future, its wrestlers, allegedly three weeks behind on paychecks, were told Thanksgiving weekend Woods could no longer finance the promotion.

MATWATCH editor Steve Beverly spent an hour and a half in Woods' WCOV-TV office last Wednesday and he summed up the situation succinctly: "I just ran out of money." The son of broadcasting mogul Charles Woods said he had been operating the CWF on bank loans the last three months.

"I love this business and I've always enjoyed wrestling. That's why I got into it," said Woods, who was a camera operator as a teenager on his father's studio wrestling shows at WTVY in Dothan, Ala. "But I was undercapitalized to stay in it. The economics are just enormous today, even on a small scale."

Woods said building rents in his larger cities of Montgomery, Birmingham and Dothan have skyrocketed. "They almost doubled the cost on us in Montgomery this past year and went up 50% on the cost of police," said Woods. "And it's either pay it or you don't get the building."

Rumors had circulated for weeks on the CWF's demise and several clues came when Robert Fuller, who just returned as booker in late summer, had already been announced as returning to USWA, where he and Brian Lee may already be the new USWA tag champs. Plus reports surfaced that Dennis Condrey, reigning CWF champion, may be working midwest and northeast indie dates with former partner Randy Rose. Then, Cactus Jack Manson, one of the country's rising stars, appeared in a tag match at the TBS WCW taping Nov. 28 in Atlanta.

Fuller and Jimmy Golden reportedly are considering keeping spot shows going in Montgomery and Dothan but insiders don't believe such an effort will succeed.

"It's really a sad situation," said Woods. "What Vince (McMahon) has done with the business in people's minds has made it next to impossible for a small territory to survive. It's really tough on the young guys. We've known that once one of them really takes off, he'll take off to either the NWA or the WWF and we don't mind that. It's just going to be that much harder for young wrestlers to find a place to learn."

Woods says the CWF drained his finances to the tune of \$15,000 a month. Fortunately, it provided a good source of advertising for his Fox affiliate, though CWF never sold its full ad inventory. "We're going to do one final taping on December 28 and unless something changes, that's going to be it," Woods said. He'll air retrospective shows through the end of the month. "We have about 150 hours in the can (with the 26 shows of the USA promotion Woods bought in July 1988)," said Woods, "but I don't want to do with them like ESPN does with World Class. Fans like things current."

Woods bought Continental early last year when it was on the verge of collapse and two months later, hired Eddie Gilbert as booker. By late spring of 1988, the CWF had a weekly slot on Financial News Network's SCORE service and Gilbert's repackaging of stars such as Pez Whatley (as Willie B. Hert), Tom Prichard (as a babyface), elevating Shane Douglas and Lord Humongous (Sid Vicious) to star status and incorporating fresh talent into the circuit, topped by the irreverent Paul E. Dangerously, brought national attention to CWF and led to Gilbert's selection as MATWATCH Man of the Year in 1988.

**"It's really a sad situation. It's going to be that much tougher on the young guys to find a place to learn."**

---DAVID WOODS

Woods and Gilbert parted company in late September of 1988 amidst a sea of charges and countercharges over the promotion's operation. The CWF never recovered financially or in fan interest. A return to Bob Armstrong as booker reverted the group into a play-it-safe presentation with stale talent. But Woods professes yet to be a big Gilbert fan.

"Eddie's probably the greatest heel in the business," says Woods. "And if he doesn't stay with the NWA, if he had the financial backing, he could probably be the one guy who could run a successful regional territory."

Speculation has continued almost since Woods' purchase that Ron Fuller would eventually attempt to take over the territory (as he's done twice before) if Woods tapped out at the cash register. But a key insider doubts it. "Fuller is too involved with his minor league hockey team and he knows now a small wrestling promotion is not the best investment."

Does Woods have any regrets? "No, it's been fun...just not profitable," he said. But the end of CWF ends 40 years of territorial history in the Alabama-Florida Gulf Coast area, a circuit which grew from small-time stars Dick Dunn, Donnie Fargo, The Wrestling Pro, Prince Pullins, Rip Tyler and Eddie Sullivan to Mike ("The California Hippie") Boyette, who topped the old Rocky McGuire-promoted region in 1971 before 15 years later winning a reverse stardom as the man with the longest losing streak in UWF history.

In the early 1970s, the promotion was a seasoning ground for young announcer Bob Howell, who co-hosted WTVY's Studio Wrestling before going on to anchor one of the highest-rated local NBC affiliate newscasts in the U.S. in Montgomery. Later, the Freebirds, Arn Anderson, Ronnie Garvin and Eddie Borders (Ed "Brutus Beefcake" Leslie) cut their teeth in Continental.

But its most celebrated event came in 1978 when Hulk Hogan (then known as "The Wrestling Hulk") had his first encounter with Andre the Giant (in Dothan) as Andre defeated the heel Hulk in a match which has not been seen since its initial airing.

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SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent.  
POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale rating. No ratings on recap shows.

(GA. ALL-STAR) - [RECAP]: Joey Maggs d. Invader; Dino Minelli vs. Jim Powell ends in brawl; Billy Starr d. Bill Smith; Chic Donovan d. Ted Allen by DQ. NO RATING.

(CWA) - Dutch Mantel d. Keith Roberson; Soultaker d. Tom Kelly/Cowboy Steel; Tony Anthony d. David Johnson; Todd Champion d. Kevin Dillinger; Frankie Lancaster/Ricky Morton d. M.Y. Brawler/Mike Davis by DQ; ARENA: Anthony vs. Bill Dundee; Jerry Lawler d. Soultaker. VIDEO: Soultaker. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(CWF) - [RECAP]: Jerry Stubbs d. Don Harris; Terrence Garvin d. Todd Morton; DDT CHALLENGE: Dennis Condrey d. Danny Davis; Robert Fuller d. Continental Cat; Southern Boys d. Lou Fabiano/Mike Davis. NO RATING.

(USWA) - (REPLAY): Jeff Jarrett d. Sheik Braddock; (FIRST-RUN): Uncle Elmer/Cousin Junior d. The Punisher/Latin Lover by DQ when Devastation, Inc. runs in; Dustin Rhodes d. Eliminator & has standoff w. Gary Young after; Kevin Von Erich d. Braddock; POLE MATCH: Jarrett d. P.Y. Chu'i, then whips all of Tojo's guys with the strap. DRAW-PLUS.

(NWA/SYND.) - [NWA PRO]: Buzz Sawyer/Dragonmaster d. Trent Knight/Rob Morgan; 6-MAN: Samoan 3 d. Jerry Price/Lee Scott/Ricky Nelson; (From WWF): Pillman-Luger-Sting angle; Sting d. Rick Fargo; Steiners d. Avenger/Rip Rogers; Kevin Sullivan d. Alex Porteau. RESTHOLD.

[WORLD WIDE]: Tom Zenk d. Agent Steel; Luger d. Porteau; DOOM d. Tommy Rich/Ranger Ross; Midnight Express d. Bob Emory/Joe Cruz; (From WCW): Ric Flair d. Muta by DQ when Hart's Army runs in; PEDICINO'S NOSE: STARRCADE, Joe says he's disappointed in Cornette, M Ex. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(NWA/TBS) - [MAIN EVENT]: (NWA WORLD TITLE) Flair d. Bobby Eaton; plus 2 others. DRAW-PLUS.

[POWER HOUR]: Dynamic Dudes d. Rogers/Avenger; Sullivan d. Ross; Steiners d. DOOM by DQ when WOMAN, Nitron run in. Steiners & DOOM brawl after; WWW: Gordon lauds NWA for Ironman tourney; FUNK'S GRILL: Terry asks Solie if he can do opening on STARRCADE. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[WCW]: Ross d. Pat Rose but during match, Teddy Long tries to attack Norman, who had his teddy bear at ringside but Norm destroys Long, who leaves; Steiners d. Fargo/Brodie Chase; DOOM d. Jason Walker/Nelson; (REPLAY) Flair-Muta from last week & after, Flair promises "big surprise" next week; U.S. TITLE: Luger d. Pablo Crenshaw to retain belt but Sting saves & the 2 go at it before Lex retreats; Sting d. Dan Devine; N.Z. Militia d. Carl Nelson/Mike Thor; Dudes d. M Ex by DQ when Johnny Ace, who decked Corny, is swatted w. racket by Stan Lane; 6-MAN: Sawyer/Muta/Dragonmaster d. Mike Hart/Larry Santo/Tim Hughes. DRAW.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: Jake Roberts d. Al Burke; Randy Savage d. Paul Roma; Al Perez d. Conquistador I; Bad News Brown d. Mike Justice; Tito Santana d. Boris Zhukov; Brooklyn Brawler d. Jose Luis Rivera; Sheepwackers d. Barry Horowitz/Bucky Wagner; Hercules d. Akeem by DQ; BRO. LUV:

## TV TEMPO

Week of Nov. 27-Dec. 3

Roddy Piper brings out Bro in huge diaper. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WWF/SYND.) - [SUPERSTARS]: Ultimate Warrior d. Wagner; (From SNME) Rhodes-Bossman, Hogan-Poffo; Bad News Brown d. Chuck Coates; Rockies d. Horowitz/Conq I; Ted DiBiase d. Mark Reagan; BRO. LUV: Ronnie Garvin shoos Jimmy Hart/Greg Valentine w. knee brace; Terry Rooster d. Gene Ligon; Jim Duggan d. Scott Colton; Powers of Pain d. Tom Fuller & Brian Johnson. BOMB-PLUS.

[CHALLENGE]: Roberts d. Burke; Bolsheviks d. Fuller/Colton; Jimmy Snuka d. Dan Scarberry; Bad News d. Justice; Rick Martel d. Red Tyler; 'Wackers d. Horowitz/Wagner. BOMB-PLUS.

(CHICAGO CHALLENGE) - Lethal Lewis d. Mountaineer; Great Wojo d. Calypso Jim; HOW MUCH PAIN CAN YOU STAND?: Chicago Freebirds double attack Luther Lewis & Leon Spinks feebly runs off 'Birds; CLASSIC: Ernie Ladd/Jimmy Valiant d. Dick the Bruiser/Bruno Sammartino. TRIPLE BOMB...really BADD.

(WINDY CITY) - Rich Luck d. Capt. Fantastic; Roxie Cash draw vs. DDT Denny Thomas. BOMB-PLUS.

(PWF) - Brickhouse Brown d. Scrapiron; Ron Slinker no contest vs. Tyree Pride when Mark Starr & Lou Perez run in; ANGLE: Bounty Hunters win "countout" over Billy Jack Haynes & "brother" Bubba Jack, who "didn't show"; LADIES VIEW: Buggy McGraw discusses run in Diane Hamilton's hose; Jim Backlund d. Mike Graham by DQ when Jim flips over top. BOMB.

(PORTLAND) - Steve Doll d. Col. DeBeers; Scotty the Body d. Carl Stiles w. coal miner's glove; TV TITLE: Rex King d. Al Madril but Jonathan Boyd later steals King's belt; Boyd d. Bill Francis by DQ for over-the-top; Beetlejuice d. Jonathan Holliday by DQ when Holliday slugs ref; ANGLE: Ginger & Veronica argue, Scotty breaks it up and begins singing "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" (badly) to Ginger. As Scotty gets on knee to propose, Doll beats Scotty to a pulp & Veronica pours beer over Ginger. POWERSLAM.

(LUCHA LIBRE/GALAVISION) - Pirata Morgan wins Mexican jr. heavyweight title; 6-MAN: Big Van Vader/Cien Caras/Fabuloso Blondy d. Faraon/Satanico/Lizmark 2-3 falls; HAIR VS. HAIR: El Brazo de Plata/El Brazo d. El Hombre Bala/El Verdugo 2-3. POWERSLAM-PLUS.

(NORTH AMERICAN) - Rocky King d. Larry Santana; New Fantastics d. Stormtrooper/El Lobo; The "Sheik" (George Weingeroff) d. Jeff Gamble; The Bullet d. Terry Gordy by DQ when Gordy chokes Bob w. towel before Brad Armstrong saves. RESTHOLD.

(STAMPEDE) - Sumohara d. Ken Johnson; Chris Benoit/Biff Wellington d. Jason Anderson/Dr. Zhivago; D.J. Peterson d. Skull Mason; Archangel d. Vinnie Valentino; Owen Hart d. Larry Cameron; Johnny Smith d. Davey Boy Smith by DQ; ANGLE: Owen presented "PWI Most Popular Wrestler Award" & gets trophy & flowers. Cameron destroys trophy & bouquet. POWERSLAM-PLUS.

## LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Jim Cornette, PH: "You ever hear of Harve the Hammer? Took his victims out with a ball peen hammer. Kevin Sulli-



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van feels a real kinship with him." 2. Terrence Garvin & Marc Lowrance, USWA: (TG) "I'm mad that I wasn't on the USWA calendar." (ML) "They wanted it to sell." 3. Bobby Heenan, PTW, to Roddy Piper: "Anytime you've been to a yard where there's activities, it had barbed-wire fences & guards." 4. Cornette, PH: "Those Steiners are so goofy, you could brainwash 'em with an eyedropper." 5. Cornette, PH, on The Avenger: "He looks like he's wearing a big blue tube sock." 6. Lowrance/Garvin, USWA: (ML) "Dustin Rhodes is 6-foot-6." (TG) "He's gonna be that wide one day." 7. Kevin Sullivan, WCW: "When we were in Grenada, I was afraid those people were going to come attack us with rocks." 8. Norman, on Sullivan: "I know bad men & good men. He's a bad man." 9. Vince McMahon/Jesse Ventura, WWF: (V Mc) "Topeka's the home of the Sizzlers." (JV) "The steak house?" (V Mc) "No." (V Mc) "Easy mistake. When they win, it's rare." 10. Ventura, WWF: "He's horrible to look at. You don't eat lunch & watch Hacksaw Jim Duggan wrestle."

11. Cornette & Ross, PH: (JR) "Some of us like the opposite sex, Corny." (JC) "Only problem is: I can't figure out what sex is opposite from you." 12. Ross, PH: "WOMAN's about as popular as Bo Schembechler would be in Columbus, Ohio." 13. Ventura, WWF: "That description fits you pretty well, McMahon: a beer-bellied sharecropper." 14. Downtown Bruno, CWF, to Charlie Platt: "I'd get in a battle of wits with you, but you ain't got no ammunition." 15. Ross, WCW: "Ric Flair: we're not talking about Rottie Kazootie here." 16. Condrey, CWF: "If my mama was to jump in that ring, I'd DDT her." 17. Don Coss, Portland, on Scotty kissing Holliday's forehead: "You don't know where that forehead's been." 18. Johnny Smith, Stampede: "I've got more tricks up my sleeve than Jessica Hahn." 19. Hugh Hart, Stampede: "Owen Hart's like an old car---every so often, he sputters, then comes through at 80 miles an hour." 20. Hugh Hart & Pete Montana, Stampede: (HH) "Owen ought to go to the gym & learn some gymnastics. Maybe he'll be like Lethal Larry Cameron." (PM) "He does that." (HH) "Combing his hair, maybe."

**STRONGEST COMMENTS** - 1. Garvin/Lowrance, USWA: (TG) "My forte's not really poles, Marc." (ML) "Nor is it broadcasting." 2. Cornette, PH: "These women in Columbus, Ohio, have never been touched by men---or anything else, for that matter."

**QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK** - 1. Sullivan, WCW, to Jim Ross: "Are you & Ranger Ross related?" 2. McMahon, WWF: "What-ever happened to Conquistador No. 2?" 3. Cornette, PH, on Nitron: "Didn't he used to be on LOST IN SPACE?"

**NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK** - 1. THE SINISTER MINSTER (Bob Luce on Buddy Roberts). 2. BEAST OF THE BARNYARD (McMahon on BRO. LUV). 3. TUXEDO TERRY FUNK (Terry on himself). 4. CRISPY CRUISER (Funk on Chris Cruise). 5. "HOW TO BE A JOB-BER" (Margaret Crowder on Chris Adams' instructional video).

**BEST PICTURES** - 1. TBS, Nitron making save of WOMAN. 2. TBS, Corny decking Douglas. 3. WWF, Duggan posting Colton. 4. USWA, pole match. 5. TBS, DOOM-Steiners brawl. 6. WWF, Warrior ripping at Wagner. 7. USWA, Tojo arguing w. Granny.

**WARMTH AWARD** - Funk, FUNK'S GRILL: "I want to welcome

you brilliant nitwits to STARRCADE '89."

**WORST INTERVIEW IN HISTORY AWARD** - Leon Spinks, CHICAGO CHALLENGE. Not even closed-captioning would help it.

**JERRY REED ALL-CLICHE TEAM** - Kevin Sullivan, WCW: "When you're hot, you're hot. When you're not, you're not."

**BLOOPER AWARDS** - 1. T. Garvin, USWA, for calling P.Y. Chu'i "Tojo Yamamoto" twice. 2. Cornette, PH, for calling Bo Schembechler BO SCHOTTELKOTTE. 3. USWA, for labeling The Eliminator as TEXAS BATTLESHIP II.

**BOO AWARDS** - 1. Robert Fuller, CWF, for being bleeped 3 times during interview. 2. PWF, for Rev. Billy C. Wirtz interview so vulgar it made Dusty's toilet segment classy.

## TUBE TALK

The Cactus Jack-Ron Starr CWF melee was BRAWL OF THE YEAR material....Cactus debuted for WCW at Nov. 20 taping....Jim Ross returns and Terry Funk added to NWA booking committee. Ron West's North American group has lost its backing and is folding....Flair-Muta match on WCW 11/25 scored a 3.4 rating & 6.4 share....For you in Baltimore, I'll be on Larry Katz's wrestling radio show this Sunday morning at 3 a.m.

I want to do a feature on radio wrestling call-in shows. If you do one, drop me a line telling air time & answer these: 1) what age are most of your listeners? 2) what kinds of questions do callers ask? 3) does your show do well in ad sales? 4) how do you feel about the current state of wrestling?....PWF doing Global-type burial on Billy Jack Haynes, who left after 2 weeks. ...Saturday on PWF, Blackjack Mulligan vs. Buggy bullrope match....If you get the Buck Robley (La.), Texas Superstars (Tim Brooks), Windy City or Chicago Challenge shows, drop me a card with weekly TV results & any good lines, I'd appreciate it....Finally, CLASH X will be Feb. 6 on TBS from Corpus Christi. PSB.

**SUBSCRIBER'S NOTE:** Beginning this issue, your mailing label includes your expiration date.

## MATWATCH ANNUAL

The MATWATCH 1989 ANNUAL: THE DECADE THAT CHANGED IT ALL is targeted for a Jan. 15 publication date. Cost: \$10 for U.S. & Canadian subscribers and \$18 for overseas.

Included: the naming of the 1989 MATWATCH MAN OF THE YEAR, MATWATCHER OF THE YEAR, the top ten TV NEWS STORIES OF THE YEAR, a review of ten events that changed wrestling in the 1980s, your choices for the 1989 MATWATCH TV AWARDS, a WRESTLING TV LOG, comics, and Steve Beverly's 1990 forecast.

If you give a gift annual to a friend, you receive a free 3-issue bonus order to MATWATCH. Check, cash or money order to STEVE BEVERLY, 213 PINE HILLS AVE., AUBURN AL 36830.

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**ARN & THE CORE:** Arn Anderson did appear at the TBS/WCW taping at the Center Stage Nov. 28 as Ric Flair's "big surprise." Arn, Ric & Ole Anderson were introduced as the "core of the Four Horsemen" but no mention made of Tully Blanchard.

**TULLY'S FUTURE:** No one is really certain. Blanchard has reportedly had overtures from both the AWA and USWA but has no interest in going to either.

**2-OUT-OF-3:** Two stories are being passed as to why Tully & Arn were not shown losing 2 straight falls on SNME as we are told did happen in Topeka. One is that the match shown was actually from Wichita (a Titan story). Another is that a second fall was edited in. While some shots appear to have the same fans at ringside, others appear to have different banners hanging. Whatever, it was creative.

**POLL RESULTS:** Reviewing the recent cards, we received 153 calls on CLASH IX, our largest phone response ever to a clash with all positive. On SURVIVORS, we tallied 66 calls with 48 rating it poor (73%), only 3 rating it good (5%) and 15 calling it average or so-so (22%). Of the 34 who called about SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT, all but two evaluated it as the worst SNME Vince McMahon has ever produced.

**HOLLYWOOD HEAVIES:** Former PNW/SCORE regular Broadway Danny Wolf is about to organize a series of monthly indies in the L.A. area called Hollywood Heavyweight Wrestling. He's negotiating to hold it in a club called the Music Machine, which could hold around 1,000 and plans are to have a live band for the ring intros. Wolf is looking to use many of the Lucha Libre West Coast guys.

**CHICAGOLAND:** Just got a sample of Buddy Roberts & Bob Luce's new CHICAGO CHALLENGE WRESTLING. I'll review it next week but take my word for it: it is perhaps the second worst pro wrestling TV show I've ever seen, save a little ditty called METRO CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING on Prime Cable in Atlanta, featuring a color commentator named Wilhelmina.

**ROYAL RUMBLE:** Here's the tentative lineup for ROYAL RUMBLE III in Orlando. A 30-man rumble, plus Rockers vs. Powers of Pain, Valentine vs. Garvin, Beefcake vs. Poffo, Bushwackers vs. Rougeaus (again!) and BRO. LUV with Sapphire (Dusty Rhodes' dancing partner) and Sherri Martel (are we foreshadowing a Savage-Rhodes series, heaven forbid?).

**ROUGEAUS RACKET:** Jacques Rougeau showed up in an Eric Caidin's memorabilia shop in L.A. last week. He said he and Raymond are staying on Vince's payroll to do p.r. work and will work occasional spots, like RUMBLE. But he said he and his brother wanted to spend a year off with their families.

**THANKSGIVING WOES:** Other than the 7,500 at the Omni for the NWA Thanksgiving show (and that was down from recent shows), the holiday crowds for both WWF and NWA were well down. The gate for Madison Square Garden was the lowest in at least 10 years, Oakland drew only 5,000 for the WWF and New Haven around 1,600 for the NWA. Is it that folks are burned out or did the \$23 for SURVIVORS clean their wallets?

**SURVIVOR BUYS:** Looks like the SURVIVOR SERIES buy-rate will fall somewhere around last year's 2.8%. Many major cities were in the 3.0-3.2% range although Denver hit an 8%. Figures were low across the Deep South. The show should be around a \$9 million gross for Titan.

**IS MEMPHIS NEXT?:** I've heard even from two executives of other wrestling organizations that the CWA won't last beyond February but that still is not certain. Crowds are actually up slightly in Memphis after what appears to be a Jerry Lawler turn. He worked against Bill Dundee last Monday but this all may smack of desperation.

**I'LL BE THERE:** Robert Fuller, due to edit CWF's recap show last Tuesday at 2 p.m., called three times and eventually didn't show for the session. The WCOV production crew waited until 6 p.m. and went home.

**WHO GETS THE SLOTS?:** David Woods believes in the six cities where CWF airs, either the NWA or USWA will gain the time slots, or the airing stations will just go with one fewer hour of wrestling.

**SURE YOU WILL:** Interestingly, Woods has a TV problem with Titan. The WWF promised to spend several thousand dollars in advertising with WCOV when they bring arena shows to Montgomery (as in this Saturday) if Woods would drop all other wrestling but CWF. Now, Titan is reneging on the deal ---which places SUPERSTARS in jeopardy on the station.

**WWF DATES:** Next WWF tape dates are next Tuesday in Nashville and Wednesday in Huntsville, Ala. Speculation is high on the WRESTLEMANIA topline possibilities. Many analysts now believe Hogan-Zeus will die after this tag cage match Dec. 27. The one match McMahon would love is a mixed tag with Hogan/Liz vs. Sherri/Savage but I'm told consideration is even being given to bringing in Nicola Roberts as Hogan's partner if that one swings. Another story in Toronto is Beefcake will eventually accept a bribe from Ted DiBiase, go heel again and be Hogan's opponent. Stay tuned.

**SPORTING BLOOPER:** In the Nov. 27 issue of THE SPORTING NEWS, a feature on Miami Dolphins punter Reggie Roby lists him as having worked 2 years ago "for television station WTBS in Atlanta as a floor producer for World Wrestling Federation matches." I'm sure Ted & Vince were enlightened.

**THE OTHER GILBERT:** Look for Doug Gilbert to work a lot of shots for ICW and Windy City in the next month or so. Also, expect ICW to get the slot on Atlanta's WVEU SUPERSTARS after CWF ends its run.

**POST-CHRISTMAS:** Expect a run of Flair-Luger matches right after Christmas and Sting-Ole-Arn vs. Muta-Dragon Master-Buzz Sawyer.

**AT LEAST HE'S HONEST:** McMahon reportedly is honest enough to concede the current dropoff in crowds stems from giving fans matches (Savage-Duggan, Warrior-Bravo) they don't really want to see. Certainly, we could add Hogan-Poffo and Andre vs. anybody to that list.

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## RATINGS RAP

### CABLE

Week Ending Nov. 27	Rating	Share	Total Homes
NWA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 11/25)	3.1	6.0	1.58 mil.
NWA MAIN EVENT (TBS 11/26)	3.1	5.1	1.57 mil.
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 11/27)	3.0	4.4	1.46 mil.
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 11/24)	2.5	4.4	1.27 mil.
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 11/26)	2.4	5.7	1.16 mil.
NWA POWER (Repeat) (TBS 11/25)	0.7	6.5	356,000

### CABLE

Week Ending Nov. 19	Rating	Stations	Pct. U.S.
WWF	8.6	250	97%
NWA	6.3	165	92%

(ANALYSIS: WCW appears to be on a roll and the Flair-Muta match definitely hit the ratings jackpot. It's the first time in more than a year that the TBS Saturday show led the numbers two straight weeks. Even more surprising is its strength against the highest-rated college football game [Notre Dame-Miami] of the year. MAIN EVENT rallied for a virtual tie despite an average show and opposite strong NFL games. PRIME TIME gained for the third straight week, obviously some from people wanting to know what happened at SURVIVOR SERIES---which was only hinted at. POWER HOUR was up 14% over the previous week. ALL-AMERICAN posted a season low share, a bit puzzling with everyone else up.)

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## ONE YEAR AGO IN MATWATCH...

---WWF PRIME TIME tops NWA WCW 2.8 to 2.5 in cable ratings. MAIN EVENT and ALL-AMERICAN each post 2.4.

---MATWATCH gives SURVIVOR SERIES a 19.9 on its 25 SCALE, best-ever for a WWF show.

---Nikita Koloff quits the NWA. TBS flooded with angry calls about Dusty Rhodes' "spike" angle with Animal.

---Jerry Blackwell talks with David Woods about a possible buyout of Southern Championship.

---Jim Cornette says, "Randy Rose looks like a moose with a hernia next to Beautiful Bobby."

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